

Danvers River Committee
Thursday June 16, 2022
Meeting Minutes

The Danvers River Committee held a public meeting on Thursday June 16, 2022 at the Endicott Park Visitors Center (Conference Room) at 6:00pm.

Member(s) present: Dan DeLorenzo, Chair
Matthew Byrne
Andrea Daley
Bill Fouhey
Louie George
Robert Hemeon
Bob Moore
Tom Perry

Member(s) absent: William Ciesinski
Michael McCarthy
Gardner Trask, Selectman Liaison

Staff Present: Christopher Sanborn, Director of Natural Resources
Carolann Powers, Secretary

Media Present: None

Dan DeLorenzo called meeting called to order at 6:04 pm.

Secretary's Report:

The committee was asked to accept the minutes of the May 19,2022 meeting.

Motion: Made by Bill Fouhey, seconded by Matt Byrne to accept the minutes of the May 19, 2022, meeting; All in favor: 7:0. Note: Louie G. abstained from voting as he was not at the May meeting.

New Business:

The committee held an election for Chair and Co-Chair of the committee. Prior to taking a vote for these positions the committee discussed their options for nominees. Dan DeLorenzo reminded committee that he took over position as chair temporarily after

Aileen L'Abbe passed away. It was noted that he has served in that position several times previously and suggested they nominate someone new for the position as he will be out of state for some winter months and unavailable to attend meetings.

Matt Byrne was nominated for Chair by Bill Fouhey and accepted the nomination. Louie George was nominated for Co-Chair by Andrea Daley and accepted the nomination.

Motion: Motion made by Bill Fouhey, seconded by Andrea Daley, to elect Matt Byrne as Chair of the River Committee. All in favor: 8:0

Motion: Motion made by Andrea Daley, seconded by Bill Fouhey, to elect Louie George as Co-Chair of the River Committee. All in favor: 8:0

Chris Sanborn provided the committee with a waterfront update. He said there has been a good return rate this season with permits. 497 waterways permits approved, 41 tender permits, 23 season ramp, 95 ramp permits and the marina is at capacity at 65 boats. Chris noted there are 33 people on marina waitlist, 24 on the mooring waitlist which is down from last month as some spots have been filled and others removed from the list who are no longer interested. He noted the town marina is full, and they are actively filling mooring space from a waitlist. His department has been cleaning up marina waitlist, noting to remain on the list one is required to own a registered boat.

Chris updated the committee regarding the repairs to fire pump on marine 25. He noted that some of these repairs were extensive due to saltwater corrosion. At this time the repairs are complete, and it is in service. He thanked his very talented staff for their skill in performing this repair.

Matt B. asked how the parking situation has been at Popes Landing on busy days/weekends. Chris said it has been very busy and they are doing their best with the resources they have. They have communicated with local businesses in the area to advise them that they should not be using the parking lot for their business use on weekends. Tom Perry suggested different color line markings to designate spots for boaters who pay to use the lot. Chris S. said the state regulates the use of the lot for boaters and trailers for those using the ramp, when we partnered into the Land Use Agreement with the state, we understood the allowed uses. Matt B. said it is for boating & fishing access. Chris clarified it is for boating access only, boaters with and without trailers. It is a very gray area. Chris will explore possibilities to help regulate the parking that will be suitable to the State. Louie G. asked if all boaters including kayakers pay the ramp launch fee. Chris said no, they aren't that stringent. The kayaks and canoes don't tie up the ramp for too long, so they charge only motorized vessels. We want to encourage passive recreation such as kayaking and canoeing. Andrea D. asked if the Riverside School parking lot is used for boaters to park their cars as overflow

parking. Chris said they no longer use that as an overflow. Chris noted that since the Kernwood ramp re-opened they can accommodate larger trailers and any overflow that Popes Landing can't accommodate. Bill F. asked if Sandy Beach would be an option if we put a float there for kayakers to utilize for launch. Chris said no as that would require a very long pier to access a float and in addition there are strict regulations on floats sitting in the mud flats.

Old Business:

Chris Sanborn provided an update on private dock and pier construction in Danvers. He said the town continues to receive dock/pier/float applications from residents. This speaks to why we need to regulate this process as a town. Having regulations will control this process. The town most recently has received a new application from a resident on Chevalier Ave. Chris said he and Georgia Pendergast, of Land use and Community Services Dept., are working with the Urban Harbor Institute to determine whether it is appropriate to incorporate guidelines into a new waterfront master plan. Urban Harbors Institute creates waterfront mater plans for municipalities. Town is looking to partner with them. The estimate to budget this partnership is approx. \$6k which can be funded out the Land Use and Community Services FY'23 budget. Louie G. asked if part of the master plan could include a cap in the number of piers/docks/floats structures that could be approved annually by the town and if so, what would that ideal max/saturation number be. Chris S. said yes that would be part of the overall goal. Andrea D. stated that once one resident puts up a structure, then another does it and it seems to be done in a hodge-podge fashion; because of that she likes the idea of a master plan. Chris said in his research he has learned that some communities offer shared structures. Andrea D. said she likes the idea of residents sharing a structure allowing them potentially more flexibility with size of the structure. However, she is concerned with how long some of the structures are and will be. She offered to get maps of the harbor for each member of the committee from Rene hunter in the Town's Engineering Dept. Chris said all mapping will be part of the master plan and will be shared with Rene Hunter to integrate into the town's GIS map system. Chris said the initial phase of this study will develop a baseline plan and that will hopefully lead to the development of a master plan.

Chris followed up with the committee from last month's meeting regarding the survey he shared of private marinas about dockage and their dockage rates relative to what the town is charging per foot for dockage at the Town Marina. Chris Sanborn had noted that the committee and the town should take into consideration the amenities that are being offered at the other marinas when considering our fees. He felt that we aren't charging enough but also does not want to outprice ourselves so that we can't fill open slips. The committee discussed what they thought were reasonable fees. Chris distributed a chart with comparisons from surrounding communities. He noted these comparisons are not an absolute as fees are very specific to each community. Chris noted he likes to compare Danvers to Beverly and Salem as they are more similar than other communities. Chris asked the committee what their thoughts were regarding our fees. He said we don't need to decide just yet regarding changes to any town fees; but asked the committee to think about this over the next weeks & months. Dan D. asked when the town would want to their input. Chris said by November to be presented by the end of the year to be implemented in January. Chris said it is important to look at the Waterway Fees as those

impact the dredging funds. Chris noted that all boater fees in town are regulated by the town except for ramp fees as those are set and regulated by the State Public Access Board. Bob H. asked when we can ask the state if the ramp fees can be increased. Chris said we can ask them at any time, but they are strict with those fees and likely will not allow an increase. Dan D. said committee with put some thought into the fees and we can keep this on the agenda at future meetings.

Dan D. how long ago was the Waterways Fee was implemented. Chris S. said it was implemented in 1995.

Louie G. asked how boat activity has been with the higher gas prices. Chris S. said it had been busy, but selectively busy, with higher activity on better weather days.

Andrea D. asked when Sandy Beach will open for the season. Chris S. said it is open year-round, but the town starts water quality testing Memorial Day. The most recent test failed. She asked why. Chris noted there could be multiple causes ranging from storm water run-off to boaters holding tanks etc.... Chris informed the committee that there will be no lifeguards at the beach this summer; these funds have been redirected, as in recent years there has been little to no use of the beach/water. There had historically been \$20k a year budgeted to support lifeguard positions but unfortunately no need for this use. Louie G. asked if the sand on the beach had been topped of this year. Chris S. said no, not this year. The beach is not getting the usage that justifies that or lifeguards. Chris noted that with the assistance of State Representative Sally Kerans the town received \$150k appropriation from the state for improvements to Sandy Beach. The town is currently looking into what can be done for improvements with this money.

Mr. Bradstreet attended the meeting and asked a question about parking in Sandy Beach area. He wanted to know if the fenced in area near Sandy Beach is it available for public parking. Chris S. said yes. He also asked about the possibility of decorating a particular tree near Popes Landing that could be used for holiday tree. Chris said that may be a possibility and in addition the department has some other ideas already in the planning stages for a holiday tree.

Motion: Motion made by Louie George, seconded by Bill Fouhey, to adjourn the meeting of June 16, 2022. All in favor: 8:0

cc: Steve Bartha, Town Manager
David Mountain, Recreation Director